

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4502

COMMITTEES:

BUDGET

ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR,
AND PENSIONS

VETERANS' AFFAIRS

February 4, 2009

The Honorable Ben S. Bernanke
Chairman
Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System
20th Street and Constitution Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20551

Dear Chairman Bernanke:

I am writing to request that the Federal Reserve provide detailed information about the reported trillions of dollars of loans and other assistance that the Federal Reserve has provided financial institutions and others.

As you are well aware, our nation is in the midst of a devastating financial and economic crisis. In an effort to combat this crisis the current and past Administrations and the Congress have taken or are contemplating various bold steps. Some, like the TARP bank bailout provisions, I opposed. Some, like the Economic Recovery program that is working its way through Congress, I intend to support. But whether one supports or opposes these specific actions, these provisions were and are being openly debated in the full view of the American public.

On the other hand, there has been little, if any, scrutiny by the Congress or the public of the more than \$2 trillion that the Federal Reserve has reportedly committed. Given the size of these commitments it is incomprehensible that the American people have not received specific details about them. Nor have the American people's elected representatives who are granted the "power of the purse" under our Constitutional system been given specific details.

Without concrete information it is impossible to know whether these obligations are being made prudently, without conflicts of interest, and on terms that are favorable to the American taxpayer. Therefore, I am requesting that you provide me within the next ten days the following information:

- The identity of each business, individual or entity to which the Federal Reserve has provided assistance in the last 24 months;
- The type of assistance provided to that business or individual;
- The value or amount of that assistance;
- The specific terms of any repayment expected, including, but not limited to, the repayment time period, interest charges, collateral, limitations on executive compensation or dividends, and other material terms; and
- The specific rationale for providing assistance in each instance.

Let me thank you in advance for your compliance with this request. I am sure you will agree that transparency and accountability are critical to maintaining the credibility of the federal government during these difficult times, and critical to the orderly operation of our democratic system. If you require further information, please do not hesitate to contact me. Also, your staff can contact Jeff Weaver or Warren Gunnels of my staff. They can both be reached at (202) 224-5141.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Bernard Sanders", with a stylized, cursive script.

BERNARD SANDERS
United States Senator